

MONTGOMERY COUNTY COMMISSION FOR WOMEN

401 North Washington Street, Suite 100
Rockville, Maryland 20850

MEETING MINUTES

February 22, 2006

7:10 p.m.

ATTENDING

Gloria A. Aparicio
Holly Fechner (by telephone)
Deborah L. Horan
Shirley L. Johnson
Anne S. Kasper
Elizabeth Keyes
Resa Levy
Fauzia R. Najm
Martha Nguyen
Regina L. Oldak
Tedi S. Osias
Shelia Parker
Yun Jung Yang

STAFF

Paula S. Rodgers
Judith Vaughan-Prather

ABSENT

Patricia E. Cornish
Gary P. Smith

I. CALL TO ORDER/APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES.....Horan

President Horan called the meeting to order at 7:12 p.m. Two items under “New Business” the Human Rights Hall of Fame Inductees and the sexual harassment incident by the Maryland Comptroller were added to the agenda. One additional item under “Staff Report” will include an update on the Storybook Project; and several additional items were noted under “Announcements.” Upon the motion made by Commissioner Johnson, duly seconded by Commissioner Oldak and unanimously passed, the agenda was approved with the amendments.

Upon the motion made by Commissioner Fechner, duly seconded by Commissioner Nguyen and unanimously passed, the Minutes of January 25, 2006 were approved with one technical correction.

II. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPORT.....Horan

A. President's Advisory Council

Commissioners should mark their calendars for the next Presidents' Advisory Council meeting to be held on Wednesday, May 17, 2006 at 6 p.m. at Tony Lin's Kitchen in Rockville. The speaker will be announced.

B. Sunshine Peace Nomination

The Sunshine Lady Foundation, Inc. is calling for nominations for its 5th biennial event honoring individuals who work to end domestic violence. Each recipient receives a \$5,000 award and an additional \$5,000 to be contributed to a domestic violence agency of the recipient's choice. The CFW Executive Committee recommended the nomination of Dorothy Fait, former CFW president. In 1980, Ms. Fait led the establishment of the County Executive's Task Force on Domestic Violence, and more recently, she was instrumental in the passage of legislation creating the Domestic Violence Coordinating Council to continue the work of the earlier task force.

Commissioner Levy moved the nomination of Dorothy Fait for the Sunshine Peace Award. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Aparicio and unanimously approved. Executive Director Vaughan-Prather will draft and submit the nomination for Ms. Fait. Nominations must be postmarked by March 1, 2006. An awards ceremony honoring the recipients will take place in August 2006.

C. Montgomery Women Rising Star Award Nomination

Montgomery Women is seeking nominations for the Phyllis Campbell Newsome "Rising Star Award" which honors emerging women leaders in their quest to bring about social justice and advance community life, through elected and appointed offices. The CFW Executive Committee recommended that Commissioner Yun Jung Yang be nominated to this prestigious award for her work on behalf of immigrant women in Montgomery County.

Commissioner Oldak moved that Commissioner Yang be nominated for the Rising Star Award; the motion was enthusiastically seconded by Commissioner Aparicio and other commissioners, and approved by acclamation. The nomination will be drafted and submitted by staff. The deadline for nominations is February 27. The award will be presented at Montgomery Women's "Power Tea" on March 12 at Strathmore Hall.

D. BPW Women's History Event Co-Sponsorship

CFW received a request from the Montgomery County and Suburban Maryland Business and Professional Women's organizations to once again co-sponsor the Women's History Month celebration "Women: Back to the Future." CFW's co-sponsorship involves help in publicizing the event, but no financial commitment.

The motion to co-sponsor the event was moved by Commissioner Fechner, seconded by Commissioner Levy and unanimously approved. The event takes place on March 21, 2006 at the Doubletree Hotel in Rockville at 6:30 pm. Information was distributed in the CFW meeting packet and commissioners are asked to mark their calendars and plan to attend.

E. Ratification of MCEC Poll

In early February, CFW received notice that the Maryland Coalition for Emergency Contraception (MCEC) was forming to work toward the passage of a bill in the Maryland General Assembly to make Emergency Contraception available "over the counter." The Emergency Contraception bill was designated as one of the CFW's highest priorities in the Commission's legislative agenda. A decision whether to sign on as a member of the Coalition was needed before the CFW could formally join. President Horan authorized that a poll of the commissioners be taken by email with the outcome of the poll to be ratified at this meeting. Commissioners Kasper and Oldak are chairing the MCEC.

The results of the poll were 8 commissioners voting in the affirmative; and one vote against the CFW signing on as a member of the Coalition. Six commissioners did not respond to the poll vote. Therefore the "Yes" vote carried.

Upon the motion made by Commissioner Osias, seconded by Commissioner Oldak and unanimously approved, the MCEC poll vote was ratified. One commissioner abstained.

III. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. Human Rights Hall of Fame

The Commission received notice that its nominee, Emily Edmonson, will be inducted into the 2006 Montgomery County Office of Human Rights Hall of Fame. Emily will be accepted posthumously into the Hall of Fame along with 12 other distinguished Montgomery County residents (living and deceased). The induction ceremony will be held March 19, 2006 from 5-9 p.m. Executive Director Vaughan-Prather suggested that Administrative Specialist Paula Rodgers be chosen to represent CFW at the ceremony because of the work she did on the nomination. However, Ms. Rodgers has a prior commitment that day. Commissioners Johnson and Osias will attend the prestigious event. Staff will RSVP the commissioners' attendance.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

A. AAUW Sexual Harassment on Campus Report

The American Association of University Women issued a new report on sexual harassment on college campuses and the organization is asking concerned organizations to write letters to the editors of local newspapers to raise awareness of the issue. Commissioner Oldak moved that CFW send a letter to the Gazette and other local media. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Parker and unanimously approved. President Horan will draft a letter to acknowledge AAUW for its work. The letter should include CFW's recognition of sexual harassment on campuses as a serious problem and its efforts to raise awareness through the publication of the "Talk to Your Daughters About Violence" the "Know Your Rights" brochures.

B. Maryland Women's Heritage Center

The CFW received an Action Alert asking organizations and individuals to contact legislators re: their support in retaining all of the funding for the development of the Maryland Women's Heritage Center. MCCFW did send an action alert. The Executive Committee suggested that CFW send a letter in support. Commissioner Kasper moved that this issue be added to the CFW legislative agenda and that a letter be sent to the Montgomery County appropriations and budget committees urging them to support funding for the Heritage Center. Commissioner Levy seconded the motion and it was approved. Staff will draft the letter.

C. Maryland CFW Statewide Women's Roundtable

The Maryland CFW is sponsoring the Statewide Women's Roundtable on February 25, from 9:30 a.m. to noon in Annapolis. The invitation was sent to Commissioner Cornish as a member of BPW. President Horan volunteered to attend on behalf of MCCFW.

D. National Women's History Month Activities

In 2005, the CFW president was invited to give a presentation on women's history to the Board of Education; the Board may be doing a similar program this year.

Executive Director Vaughan-Prather received a request from the librarian at Catholic University's Law School Library who asked to use the biography of Kathryn J. Lawlor Shook DuFour from the CFW Women's History Archives website. The University's law library is named for Judge DuFour, Maryland's first female Circuit Court Judge, who passed away in 2005. The librarian is posting Judge DuFour's biography on the University's website. It will give MCCFW credit for the information and include a live link to our website.

E. Comptroller's Recent Behavior

News reports that Maryland's former governor and current state comptroller, Donald Schaeffer sexually harassed one of Governor Ehrlich's female aides, in public. According to news reports, Mr. Schaeffer did not acknowledge the inappropriateness of his actions or apologize for his behavior for several days. Senator Sharon Grosfeld publicly admonished the comptroller's behavior and debated the issue with another legislator.

CFW commissioners discussed their concerns about the wrong message that such behavior sends to others—especially for someone in one of the highest public officers of the state to engage in such behavior. It was decided that a letter expressing CFW's concerns be sent to local newspapers. The letter will address the concerns about the sexual harassment issue and the CFW's new brochure on sexual harassment. This letter can be the same letter regarding AAUW's new report, decided earlier in this meeting.

President Horan will also find out if any action is going to be taken by Maryland's CFW's who are in attendance at the February 25 Statewide Women's Roundtable. Ms. Horan will also let the Roundtable group know about CFW's sexual harassment brochures.

V. **STAFF REPORT**Vaughan-Prather

A. FY07 Budget

On February 6, Executive Director Vaughan-Prather and the Counseling Center's Program Manager Elma Rambo met with County Executive Douglas Duncan, members of his staff, and budget staff. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the department's need for funds to pay for workshop and Women's Legislative Briefing speakers and personnel costs. Ms. Vaughan-Prather requested and received preliminary approval for additional funds in CFW's budget. The Executive's proposed budget for the CFW must still be approved by the County Council.

B. Program Publicity

Staff has arranged with the Gazette to have an advertisement about the Counseling and Career Center printed in its newspapers. The ad will run periodically as space permits. This is a free service offered by the Gazette.

C. Annual Report

The FY 05 Annual Report is done; however, due to machine problems at the County's Print Shop, staff was unable to have a final copy of the report available for the CFW meeting. A few preliminary copies containing printer errors and marked as "Draft" were obtained by staff in order to share with the commissioners tonight. Commissioner Johnson noted that there was no mention in the report of the work

done by CFW on the County's Predatory Lending initiative. Staff will try to have this information included before the Print Shop runs the final copies of the report.

D. Girls Computer Camp

The dates for the 2006 Summer Computer Camps have been established by Montgomery College. The GURL Power Camp will be offered at the Rockville Campus (July 17-28, 2006) and Takoma Park Campus (July 31-August 11, 2006) and the Computer Programming Camp will be offered at the Germantown Campus (July 17-28, 2006). Unfortunately, Montgomery College has withdrawn the generous contract conditions it had proposed last year for this summer's sessions. It is offering instead to discount the registration by approximately 10%.

E. Mary Saxon-Clipper, of the County's Department of Corrections (DOCR) staff informed Executive Director Vaughan-Prather that DOCR is continuing to operate the Storybook Project at the county's detention center and it is expanding the program so that the male inmates can participate as well. The Delta Sigma Theta Sorority and a local church are assisting with the Storybook Project.

The Storybook Project began as a CFW Community Service Day project, led by Commissioner Parker in 2001. (The idea developed from a request by Judge Marielsa Bernard). Commissioners contributed funds to purchase books, audio tape players and tapes for incarcerated women to record their own voices reading a book. The books and tape recording materials were then mailed to the inmate's children, along with stuffed animals donated by Discovery. Volunteers from Commissioner Parker's sorority donated their time to help women with the reading and recording.

VI. COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Policy and Legislation (PAL).....Kasper

1. Policy and Legislation Committee

- Emergency Contraception (EC) hearings were very successful; CFW participated. Commissioners Oldak and Kasper have formed a MCEC Coalition which CFW by earlier vote joined. Commissioner Johnson attended on behalf of CFW and Commissioner Oldak presented the testimony when the hearing ran very late.
- Violence Against Women (Protective Orders) (SB 86 and 87) hearings have been held. SB 86 has passed the Senate; President Horan will draft a letter urging its passage from the House.
- Human Trafficking – Commissioner Fechner has been coordinating with the Maryland Human Trafficking Taskforce on testimony for hearings to be held later this month. Staff will send out an action alert once hearings are scheduled. Commissioner Johnson will attend the Human Trafficking Lobby day on March 1 in Annapolis.

- Breast Reconstruction – CFW wrote a letter to the Governor urging him to include funding in his budget for breast reconstruction services for women in the Maryland Breast and Cervical Cancer Diagnosis and Treatment Program (MD BCCDTP). CFW received a response back indicating that \$200,000 was added to the budget; however, the letter did not indicate if the money is actually going to the BCCDTP.
- Healthy Maryland Initiative – The Washington Post endorsed the initiative for an increase in the tobacco tax to help fund health care. Hearings and a press conference were held today.
- Health Care for All – This bill was introduced on February 15; hearings have not yet been scheduled.
- Clean Indoor Air Act – First reading by the House on January 28 and the Senate on January 21. No action taken yet.
- County Predatory Lending Bill – Peter Angelos has filed a number of class action lawsuits against mortgage lenders accused of predatory practices in Maryland.
- Child Care Workers Legislation - At today's PAL meeting, Sue Bull from the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) spoke about proposed legislation that would permit family child care workers to unionize and would also increase child care tax credit. The PAL Committee requested approval from CFW to review the legislation more closely and make a decision on behalf of the CFW. Hearings in the General Assembly take place on March 3 and 9, and there is not enough time to bring the matter before the full CFW.

Commissioner Osias expressed some reluctance because this is an issue that the CFW has not considered in depth before. Commissioner Fechner explained that she is very familiar with this kind of legislation as it has been considered and enacted in other states. She noted that this is important in ensuring that child care providers are paid fairly and such legislation will greatly affect the quality of child care. Commissioner Parker raised concerns that support of this legislation might favor one union over another. Commissioner Levy said that the issue of child care salaries is important to the CFW and she asked if there was some other way for the CFW to be involved.

Commissioner Oldak moved that CFW authorize the PAL committee to investigate the legislation in more detail and make a decision for how CFW should proceed. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Nguyen and passed by a 12 to 2 vote.

B. Immigrant Women in Montgomery County (IWin)Yang

1. Know Your Rights Brochures – Both brochures have been translated into four languages are at the printers. Plans are underway for the March 8 Press Conference; the time will be announced.

2. Domestic Workers Survey – The George Washington University students are gathering input and hope to complete the survey and release the findings and recommendations in May 2006.

3. Domestic Workers Brochure – The first draft of the brochure has been written by Commissioner Keyes and President Horan has edited it. The IWin Committee is hoping to translate and publish the brochure this spring.

C. Status of Women in Montgomery County (SWIM)Cornish

Commissioner Cornish is absent tonight. The Status of Women project is moving along; the committee is pulling together statistics on immigrate women to use at the March 8 Press Conference.

VII. LIAISON REPORTS

A. Women's Fair

Brochures for the 2006 Women's Fair were distributed to Commissioners. CFW will be a co-sponsor and an exhibitor at the April 1st event.

B. NACW

The NACW Board of Directors will meet at the MCCFW offices March 27-29. A report on NACW activities will be provided at the March CFW meeting.

C. Fair Housing

An educational forum, "One Stop Fair Housing Shop: Meet the Regulators" is being sponsored by the Montgomery County Office of Human Rights on April 27, from 1 to 4 pm at the Stella B. Warner council Office Building. The forum is free; however advance registration is required. To RSVP or for more information, contact cecelia.hatton@montgomerycountymd.gov (240-777-8468).

VIII. ANNOUNCEMENTS

A. The National Institutes of Health is holding a 2-day conference (February 28-March 1) to examine findings from the Women's Health Initiative, the largest and most comprehensive study of postmenopausal women's health ever conducted in the United States. The conference takes place at the NIH Campus in Bethesda, Maryland.

B. The Annual Pro Choice Lobby Night sponsored by NARAL, Maryland and Planned Parenthood of Maryland and of Metropolitan Washington, will be held February 27 in Annapolis. Information was distributed in the CFW meeting packet.

C. MCASA and NOW Lobby Day in Annapolis on March 8, 2006.

- D. The Maryland Equal Pay Commission met recently. One topic of discussion was whether the commission's focus was a national or statewide one.
- E. The National Association of Commissions for Women (NACW) has launched an affiliate membership drive for current and former members of state and local commissions for women. NACW has been streamlining its administration and enhancing its effectiveness as the national network of commissions for women. MCCFW members are encouraged to join.
- F. Commissioner Fechner said that the 2006 Women's Legislative Briefing was wonderful, although she said that it seemed to be limited in the number of young women attendees. Commissioner Oldak commented on the broad spectrum of women attendees and said that recent Briefings have had increased numbers of younger women. Congratulations were expressed to WLB Chair Reggie Oldak and the planning committee. Appreciation was also extended to Executive Director Vaughan Prather and Administrative Specialist Rodgers for carrying out a successful event.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Commission for Women, the meeting was adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

**Minutes Submitted By
Paula S. Rodgers
Montgomery County Commission for Women**

CFW Action and Follow-Up Items

- ☐ 1. Commissioners are asked to mark their calendars for the next Presidents' Advisory Council meeting that will be held on Wednesday, May 17, 2006 at 6 p.m. at Tony Lin's Kitchen in Rockville. The speaker will be announced.
- ☐ 2. Executive Director Vaughan-Prather will draft and submit the nomination for Ms. Fait for the Sunshine Peace Award.
- ☐ 3. Commissioner Oldak will draft the nomination for Commissioner Yang to be submitted for the Rising Star Award.
- ☐ 4. Commissioners should mark their calendars and plan to attend BPW's Women's History Month celebration "Women: Back to the Future." The event takes place on March 21, 2006 at the Doubletree Hotel in Rockville at 6:30 pm.
- ☐ 5. Staff will RSVP Commissioners Johnson and Osias' attendance at the March 19, 2006 Human Rights Hall of Fame induction ceremony.
- 6. President Horan will draft a letter to the editors of local newspapers to raise awareness of sexual harassment. The letter will acknowledge AAUW for its report on sexual harassment on college campuses, include mention of CFW's new brochure on sexual harassment and express the CFW's concern re: the recent inappropriate conduct on the part of the State Comptroller.
- ☐ 7. Staff will draft a letter in support of funding for the Maryland Women's Heritage Center.
- ☐ 8. President Horan to attend the Maryland CFW's Statewide Women's Roundtable on February 25, from 9:30 a.m. to noon in Annapolis. President Horan will also find out if any action is going to be taken by Maryland's CFW's who are in attendance at the February 25 Statewide Women's Roundtable. Ms. Horan will also let the Roundtable group know about CFW's sexual harassment brochures.
- ☐ 9. Staff will try to include information into the FY 05 Annual Report about CFW's work on the County's predatory lending legislation.
- ☐ 10. President Horan will draft a letter from CFW urging the House to pass the violence against women (Protective Orders) act.
- ☐ 11. Commissioner Fechner is coordinating with the Maryland Human Trafficking Taskforce on testimony for hearings to be held later this month. Staff will send out an action alert once hearings are scheduled. Commissioner Johnson will attend the Human Trafficking Lobby day on March 1 in Annapolis.
- ☐ 12. PAL committee was authorized to investigate the Child Care Workers legislation in more detail and make a decision on how CFW should proceed.
- ☐ 13. A report on NACW activities will be provided at the March CFW meeting.
- ☐ 14. MCCFW commissioners are encouraged to join NACW as affiliate members. Information was distributed in the meeting packet.